

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 312
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to commend Senator Jim Sasser on his exemplary service to Tennessee as a statesman and to congratulate him upon his appointment as United States Ambassador to China.

WHEREAS, in the course of our state's history, there have occasionally emerged unusual men and women who have achieved great personal success and have devoted themselves, their resources, and their talents to public service; and

WHEREAS, Senator James R. Sasser is one such Tennessean, a great presence in our nation's capitol for more than eighteen years; and

WHEREAS, serving three exemplary terms in the United States Senate, from 1976 until 1994, Senator Sasser established a reputation for himself as a man of intelligence, integrity and creativity, who possessed a unique ability to fashion arguments among those of differing opinion; and

WHEREAS, a native of Memphis, Jim Sasser attended the public schools of Middle and West Tennessee and earned his bachelor's and law degrees from Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, a self-made man in every positive sense of the phrase, Senator Sasser began his political affiliation in his early twenties as regional youth director for the late Senator Estes Kefauver's 1960 campaign; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation from law school, this budding young attorney joined the Nashville firm of Goodpasture, Carpenter, Woods and Sasser, where he remained a partner until 1972; and

WHEREAS, despite the demands of his highly successful legal career, Senator Sasser continued to be an energetic participant in the governmental and political affairs of our great state, serving with both intelligence and diligence as chairman of the Tennessee Democratic Committee in the early to mid 1970s and chairman of the Tennessee Codes Commission; and

WHEREAS, elected in November 1976, Jim Sasser began his meritorious service in the United States Senate in 1977; he was a distinguished and highly respected leader in that august body for eighteen years; and

WHEREAS, this sagacious statesman devoted his time and considerable talents to a great number of committees and subcommittees while in office, of which even a brief listing is inspiring; and

WHEREAS, the epitome of an active and effective leader, Jim Sasser was chairman of the Senate Budget Committee and served on the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, presiding as chair of its subcommittee on International Finance and Monetary Policy; appointed to the Governmental Affairs Committee, Senator Sasser served as chairman of its subcommittee on general services, Federalism and the District of Columbia; and as a member of the General Services subcommittees on Federal Services, Post Office, Civil Service, and Investigations; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sasser was the first Tennessean to be appointed to the Senate Appropriations Committee since 1963; during his tenure, he gave unreservedly of himself to various Appropriations subcommittees including Commerce, Justice, State, Judiciary and related agencies, Defense, Energy and Water Development, Transportation and related agencies, and was chair of both the subcommittee on Military Construction and the subcommittee on the Legislative Branch; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sasser has had numerous high honors bestowed upon him in recognition of his excellence, including an honorary degree from Tusculum College in Greeneville, Tennessee, an honorary degree from Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee, and was most recently named a Fellow of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, a humane and caring individual, Senator Sasser has always been highly active in many worthy local concerns, having served as a board member of the Nashville Symphony Association; president of the Nashville United Nations Association; executive secretary of the Nashville Committee on Foreign Relations; and member of the Nashville State Planning Commission and the Nashville Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sasser also devotes his time and expertise to the Smithsonian Institution as a Regent, the Sergeant Alvin C. York Historical Association as a Trustee, and the American Judicature Society; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sasser's experience as both a statesman and diplomat will surely serve him well as he becomes our nation's Ambassador to China; and

WHEREAS, in a nation struggling with issues of democracy and human rights, the Chinese Ambassadorship is one laden with challenges and there can be no more qualified statesman to face these challenges than Jim Sasser; and

WHEREAS, from concerns about Chinese dominance over smaller Asian nations to U.S. commercial interests on the mainland, the former Tennessee Senator will face these political and economic issues with his usual aplomb, confidence and acuity, and produce his usual excellent results; and

WHEREAS, his countless honors and accomplishments aside, Senator Sasser is most appreciative of the love and companionship he shares with his charming wife, Mary Gordon Sasser, and his two fine children, James Gray Sasser and Elizabeth B. Sasser; and

WHEREAS, it is highly appropriate that this General Assembly pause in its deliberations to honor and commend Senator Jim Sasser as he departs the Volunteer State and these shores to represent Tennessee and our sister states as our Ambassador to China; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby commend Senator James R. Sasser on his exemplary service to Tennessee as a longtime statesman and extend to him our congratulations and best wishes upon his tenure as U.S. Ambassador to China.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.